

## COUNTRY HOUSE FURNITURE

## NOVEL DESIGNS IN WILLOW, WOOD AND RATTAN.

Sofas, Chairs and Tables for Use in the Summer Cottage—New Designs and New Color Schemes—Expensive Imported Cupboards—Piazza Chairs.

Shown in conjunction with the new exhibits of reed furniture variously called willow, rattan, cane, etc., and designed principally for country houses are sets of furniture made of painted wood treated with a preservative which protects the paint. At present this furniture is shown in buff and in dull pastel blue only. It is ornamented with fine tracings of a darker shade of the same color.

A high backed sofa, roomy armchairs, high backed chairs without arms and a round or square table go to a set and there are chairs which are sold separately. The buff design is especially liked for living rooms and foyer halls, its lines being dignified and bold. The blue designs are similar except for a band of light wood made of quarter inch strips of the wood, which crosses the back of the sofas and armchairs.

Of the smaller chairs one has a back consisting of three three inch wide panels which taper to less than two inches where they join the seat. The middle panel is taller than the others and each curves into a tall, round scallop at the top. Another chair has a back formed of a wider center panel bounded on either side with a much narrower panel, the three ending in one tall pointed round at the top.

In one respect chairs and sofas of all designs are alike, each seat, or rather the center of each seat, is made of plain black imitation leather over which is a removable cover made of a stout, pale ecru hemp material decorated in colors. The cover spreads over the entire seat, leather and woodwork and is hooked to eyelets at the corners.

Furniture of much the same pattern that is large, roomy and simple in design is made of painted wood combined with rattan, the latter introduced as panels to the seat and back. These are of straw color or they match the woodwork. Thus a big white armchair had part of the seat and the lower half of the back made of closely woven straw color rattan and in another chair of similar design the rattan was enameled white. A third was trimmed with tan color rattan.

Sets of plain gray wood are mounted with white cane and white reed seats, and like the others described they are included among the willows, reeds, rattans and canes, all members of one family. The finest of this furniture is among the fashionable materials for summer furnishings.

The imported rattan sets show curious combinations, as for instance deep red and pale green in a closely twisted small plaid. The quality of material and workmanship in these is so fine that the various pieces, including a large writing desk, small and large chairs, tabourettes, table, sofa and couch with raised end, are apparently as firm as wooden frame furniture. Further, the combined colors are pleasing to those who like Oriental effects.

Sets like this are not low priced, neither are imported single pieces, such as a cross between a cupboard and a work table, which also come from Europe and are for razza as well as indoor use. The cupboards for indoor use are something more than two feet high and perhaps fifteen inches in diameter, of pale brown or of divided green closely woven rattan and are shrouded into a lower and an upper compartment. The thing is topped with a tray, square or round, made of fine red leather, which projects an inch or two beyond the rattan's sides. A purchaser who cheerfully paid \$25 for one told the salesman the lower compartment would be a first rate place for her tiny Pomeranian to take a nap in, or the piazza or to tuck the dog in when his mistress wanted to leave him alone out of doors.

A variety of these novelties is about three and one-half feet high and twelve inches in diameter and is divided into three compartments, the top one marked "letter box" and provided with a door and a drop trimmed with red leather. This article, intended for hall or piazza use, is made of dark brown rattan and costs \$41.

One of the most stylish designs in rattan furniture is made of combined gray and black in shaded effect and of gray and dark green, whose combination is relieved with merely a sofa cushion or two placed at the ends of sofas and against the backs of chairs. Like the plaided sets, these are not fitted with seat cushions, which are reserved for the plain color furniture. A manufacturer pointed out that in reed furniture these dark sets have taken the place of the bright reds which had a vogue last year and which one has to hunt for now.

The vogue of black trimmings in English drawing rooms, he said, had something to do with this fashion and was responsible for the private orders placed for odd chairs made of black rattan and black touched up with a color. Said he:

"A recent development of the reed furniture business is that reed furniture of every sort, from the very coarse to the finest grade, may be ordered made in any color." In proof of this he showed a roomy rocker with curved back and arms made of bright purple rattan. "The having in this customer's sleeping room include several shades of lilac and she thought it would be effective to have a purple rocker and I agreed with her."

Writing desks, long oval tables and tea tables on wheels show more novelties than any other of the rattan designs. The desks, in particular, are pretty in design, large, with all sorts of pigeonholes and receptacles, including an end outside pocket for newspapers. Of these the pure white, woven in a heavy double basket pattern, are perhaps the most often bought to use in conjunction with ordinary furniture, the greens and browns being usually matched with table and chairs.

The oval tables are included only in the higher grade sets, some of which are also pure white, and they measure about twenty-two by thirty inches.

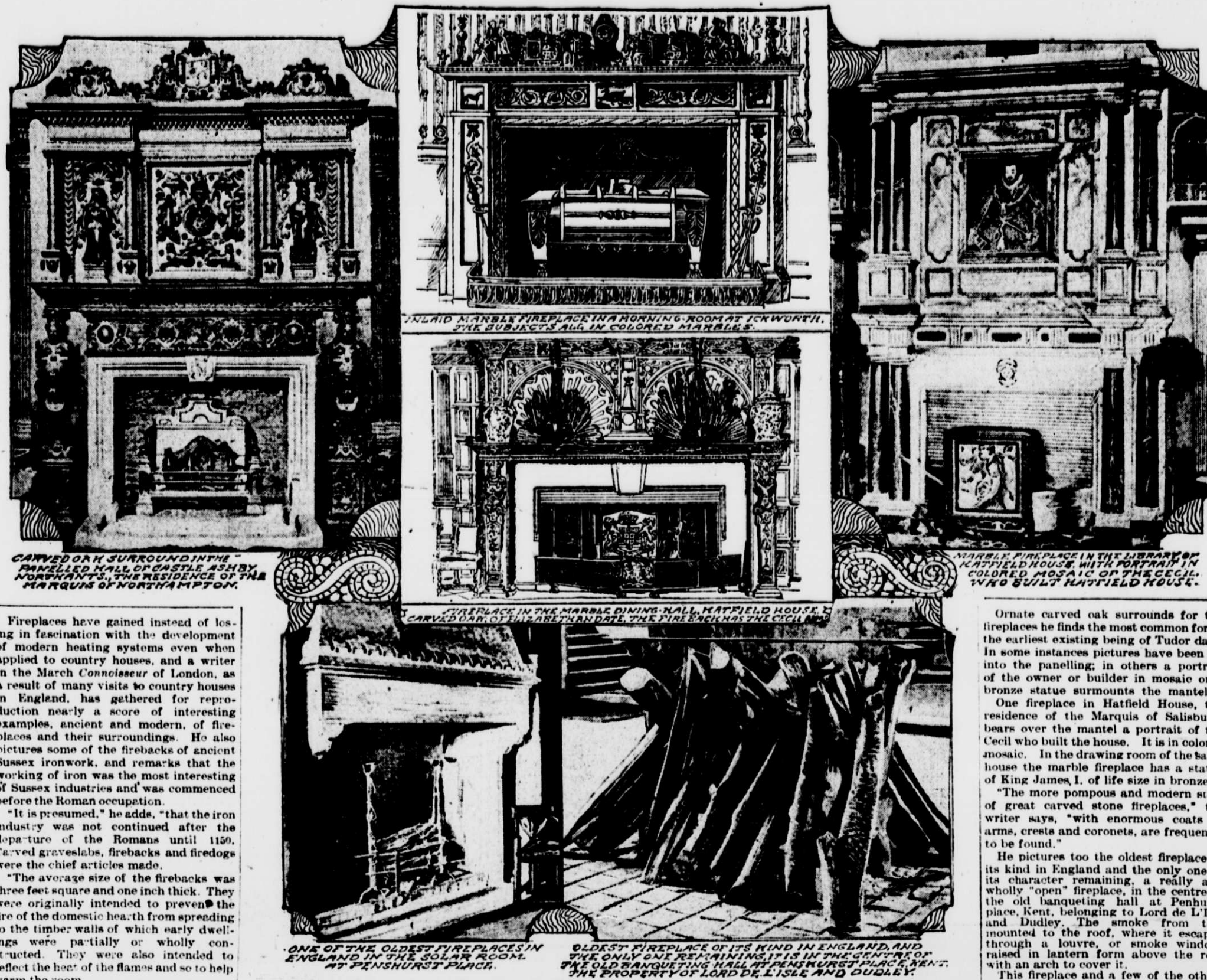
Rattan tea tables on wheels, matching in color the tone of the piazza furnishings and now classed among the indispensable for country home conveniences, are often seen in dark and in light green and in several shades of tan and brown, the larger and higher priced examples including several plate shelves and a place for tapers.

There is a new style corner couch, designed to fit into a corner, which has two or three small shelves of irregular design and differing in size placed above the high back, and a shelf and pocket within reach of the hand at either end. The prettiest are of brown and tan rattan, the seat furnished with a removable cushion covered with yellow and brown material in a flower design.

Another new corner is a narrow couch with a high chair back and small arms at one end made of pale green rattan and fitted with cushions in gay colors. Inexpensive sofas for summer use shown side by side with the rattans are made of fine cane, some having a head piece raised and covered by a spring.

But the largest variety of new designs

## Fireplaces From English Country Houses



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Fireplaces have gained instead of losing in fascination with the development of modern heating systems even when applied to country houses, and a writer in the March Connoisseur of London, as a result of many visits to country houses in England, has gathered for reproduction nearly a score of interesting examples, ancient and modern, of fireplaces and their surroundings. He also pictures some of the firebacks of ancient Sussex ironwork, and remarks that the working of iron was the most interesting of Sussex industries and was commenced before the Roman occupation.

"It is presumed," he adds, "that the iron industry was not continued after the departure of the Romans until 1150. Carved gravestones, firebacks and firedogs were the chief articles made."

"The average size of the firebacks was three feet square and one inch thick. They were originally intended to prevent the fire of the domestic hearth from spreading to the timber walls of which early dwellings were partially or wholly constructed. They were also intended to reflect the heat of the flames and so to help warm the room."

"The first kind were of simple and utilitarian character and about the fourteenth century began to be decorated with designs. The devices on these old firebacks are always interesting, for they represent

either the royal arms or the owner's arms, and sometimes only initials, while others

have legends, flowers or Scriptural subjects."

Ornate carved oak surrounds for the fireplaces he finds the most common form, the earliest existing being of Tudor date. In some instances pictures have been let into the panelling; in others a portrait of the owner or builder in mosaic or a bronze statue surmounts the mantel.

One fireplace in Hatfield House, the residence of the Marquis of Salisbury, bears over the mantel a portrait of the Cecil who built the house. It is in colored mosaic. In the drawing room of the same house the marble fireplace has a statue of King James I. of life size in bronze.

"The more pompous and modern style of great carved stone fireplaces," the writer says, "with enormous coats of arms, crests and coronets, are frequently to be found."

He pictures too the oldest fireplace of its kind in England and the only one of its character remaining, a really wholly "open" fireplace, in the centre of the old banqueting hall at Penhurst place, Kent, belonging to Lord de Lisle and Dudley. The smoke from this mounted to the roof, where it escaped through a louvre, or smoke window, raised in lantern form above the roof with an arch of lead.

This fireplace and a few of the others are reproduced on this page from the pages of the Connoisseur.

One of the oldest fireplaces in England in the solar room at Penhurst place.

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